



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

900 EAST MAIN STREET
RICHMOND, VA 23219

*Air Force Association
American Ex-Prisoners
of War
American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United
States Army
Disabled American
Veterans
Fleet Reserve Association
Korean War Veterans
Association
Legion of Valor of the
U.S., Inc.
Marine Corps League
Military Order of the
Purple Heart
Military Officers Association
of America
Military Order of the
World Wars
National Association for
Uniformed Services
Navy Seabee Veterans of
America
Non-Commissioned
Officers Association
Paralyzed Veterans of
America
Reserve Officers Association
Roanoke Valley Veterans
Council
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National
Guard Enlisted
Association
Virginia National Guard
Association
Women Marines Association*

Adopted
July 17, 2013

Updated
January 5, 2014

Position Paper 2014-02 Educating Employers on the Value of Hiring Veterans

1. **Objective:** To encourage businesses to hire and retain veterans to both take them off of unemployment and have jobs ready for veterans when they leave the military or return from deployment.
2. **Background:**
 - a. The jobless rate for veterans who were in the service following September 11, 2001 was 7.2 percent as of June 2013, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. For all veterans, the unemployment rate was 6.3 percent.
 - b. The very successful Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program, under the Department of Veterans Services (DVS), educates employers regarding the advantages of hiring veterans.
 - c. Base funding will continue to be required for the V3 Program; however, the success of any program of this nature is retention of hired veteran employees.
 - d. One new approach offered in the 2013 General Assembly Session under SB831 was to offer a Gold-Certified Veterans Employment status which focused on employee hiring and retention. It passed the Senate unanimously. Concern in the House focused around the perpetual nature of the grants rather than a one-time payment and the high annual salary (\$50,000) required to qualify. This indicates the need to further develop the program before suggesting that incentives be established.
3. **Discussion:**
 - a. The V3 Program has proven to be successful and base funding in the 2014-2016 biennial budget should continue at levels to permit its success to grow.
 - b. The Gold-Certified Veterans Employment Grant Fund program should be further investigated by DVS and revisited in advance of the 2015 General Assembly Session to ensure that:
 - A clear advantage is achieved through an incentive award program; and
 - The minimum annual salary level of the employee is realistic (e.g., at least \$30,000).
4. **Recommendation:** That the Governor and General Assembly support the hiring and retention of veterans by Virginia businesses by continuing base funding for the Virginia Values Veterans (V3) Program at \$450,000 (GF) per fiscal year.